

HIGHWAYS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE (HSS) UPDATE

BRIEFING PAPER

Prepared for the
January 2004 Transportation Commission Meeting

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PURPOSE:

The Transportation Commission needs to take action to recommend update of the Highways of Statewide Significance (HSS) System for the Legislature.

BACKGROUND:

At the December 2003 meeting, WSDOT provided an overview of staff's analysis of both the existing HSS system and nominated routes for potential addition to the system. Staff evaluated both according to the following criteria:

This statewide system shall include at a minimum interstate highways and other statewide principal arterials that are needed to connect major communities across the state and support the state's economy. (RCW 47.05.021(3)) (*emphasis added*)

[and]

The legislature declares the following transportation facilities and services to be of statewide significance: The interstate highway system, interregional state principal arterials including ferry connections that serve statewide travel....(RCW 47.06.140) (*emphasis added*)

Further, the analysis considered a Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) workgroup request to review the HSS system's relationship to the following:

- Connect major communities (over 50,000 population);
- Connect county seats;
- Support the state economy through cross-state connections for commerce, tourism and freight (strategic freight corridors, major ports, airports, and recreational attractions);
- Serve statewide travel.

DISCUSSION:

The results of staff's analysis was a recommendation that no routes be deleted from the existing system and that four (4) of the thirteen (13) nominated route additions be approved for inclusion in the HSS system. Recommended additions are SR 19 (near Port Townsend between SR 104 and SR 20), SR 704 (a yet to be constructed route across Fort

Lewis from I-5 to SR 7), SR 520 (between I-405 and SR 202) and SR 9/SR 530 (Woodinville to SR 530 then west to I-5). Some factors of the analysis were objective (i.e., principal arterial or interstate status), while others were subjective (i.e., whether a route served statewide travel or supported the state economy). Staff analysis considered the guidance offered by the LTC workgroup as well as the case presented by the applicants in their nomination packages. For example, a nomination package might contend that a proposed route supported the state economy but if it did not provide evidence to demonstrate a specific relationship between the route and the state's economy, the evaluation would have a low rating for this area.

During the December Transportation Commission briefing, route representatives were present to provide information or testify on behalf of the following proposed route additions: SR 99, SR 704, SR 19, SR 169, and SR 6. During testimony, the SR 99 advocate stated that the nomination was being modified to improve its connections to other HSS routes. The City of Auburn also suggested an additional route for HSS consideration (SR 164). Staff re-visited the evaluation in light of proposed changes and questions raised by the Transportation Commission members. Final Transportation Commission action regarding the HSS system is required at this meeting to forward to the Legislature.

RECOMMENDATION:

Existing System

WSDOT does not recommend deletion of any routes from the existing system.

Proposed Additions

Recommended additions are SR 19 (near Port Townsend between SR 104 and SR 20), SR 704 (a yet to be constructed route across Fort Lewis from I-5 to SR 7), SR 520 (between I-405 and SR 202) and SR 9/SR 530 (Woodinville to SR 530 then west to I-5).

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